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[EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm going off the grid this week to meditate. But I've still...](#)

EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm going off the grid this week to meditate. But I've still lined up some great posts for you.



Dear *Permission to be Powerful* Reader,

There's something telling—haunting—about what happens when cruelty enters a room...

...and no one says a thing.

Someone makes a cutting remark.
Someone gets humiliated, again.
Someone bullies, criticizes, disrespects.
And the room? Dead silent.

No one speaks.
No one intervenes.
No one even breathes.

And *that*—right there—is the reveal.

Because silence *isn't neutral*.
It's not passive.
It's not peace.

It's complicity.

At some point, I realized something brutal:

I had learned to associate **pain with love**.

Somewhere early on, the people who said they loved me were also the ones who *hurt me the most*.
So my nervous system got confused.

Love wasn't safety.
Love was walking on eggshells.
Love was bracing for the next emotional slap—then convincing myself it was my fault.

So later in life...

- When someone cut me down in public?

It felt **familiar**.

- When I couldn't speak up or defend myself?

That was **normal**.

- When I sat in rooms full of people who claimed to “care,” but let someone humiliate me?

I stayed. Because *that's what love was, right?*

And that's the part that stings the most.

I didn't know how to leave because I didn't know I was allowed to.

I thought love meant enduring pain in silence.
I thought speaking up would make me lose people.
I thought protecting myself was selfish.

But that's not love. That's trauma wearing a mask.

This week, I was *this close* to blocking her on Facebook.

Not out of pettiness. Not to make a scene.
But because I've had enough.

I'm not interested in staying connected to people who **chip away at me**,
then expect to keep a front-row seat to my life.

But here's the thing:
Once I block you, **you're not getting unblocked**.

I don't do dramatic exits.
I don't block and unblock like it's a game.

When I close the door, it stays closed.
Because for me, that's sacred.

Not out of hate—but out of self-respect.

Blocking someone, for me, isn't revenge.
It's the **final ritual**. The moment I say,

**“I choose peace over proof.
I choose my future over your pattern.”**

I haven't pulled the trigger yet.
But the part of me that's been *too forgiving for too long*?
He's running the show now.

When the Room Goes Quiet, Here's What It's Really Saying:

1. “We All Feel It—But No One Will Say It.”

The cruelty is never subtle. You felt it. Others do too.
But they won't name it.
They don't want to be the next target.
They've rationalized it—“*That's just how she is.*”

But deep down, everyone knows.

So they look away.
Laugh nervously.
Nod and play along.

The cost?
Truth. Integrity. Safety. All traded for comfort.

2. The Bully Has Power—and Everyone Pretends Not to See It.

Maybe it's a teacher.
An “expert.”
Someone with confidence, clout, or charisma.

They dominate the emotional space.
They’ve trained the room to defer to them.

And in that vacuum of accountability, they get *bolder*. Meaner.
And the more cruel they become, the *more* the group protects them with silence.

3. The Group Is Frozen.

What you're witnessing isn't just cowardice—it's **trauma**.
People aren't just staying quiet. They're *fawning*.
They've accepted that this is the cost of belonging.

So the room falls into this emotional paralysis:
Frozen faces. Shallow breathing. No eye contact.
Everyone pretending not to notice the elephant smashing the furniture.

And here's the part that gutted me most:

I had to leave the room to realize the room was broken.

I didn't raise my voice.
Didn't flip tables.
Didn't need to.

I just stopped going.
Stopped showing up to get picked apart.
Stopped trying to earn love from people who made me bleed for it.

That *quiet boundary* was my moment of clarity.

Because the moment I stepped out... I saw it for what it really was:
A cult of silence.

If You're Reading This and Feeling It...

Here's what I want to say to you:

- **You're not crazy.** You saw it. You felt it. It was real.
- **You don't need a public fight to reclaim your power.** A quiet exit is sometimes the loudest rebellion.
- **Walking away is not failure.** It's self-recognition.

It's saying: *I will not contort myself to fit into broken spaces.*

And you know what?

I'm done.

Done chasing love in rooms where I have to shrink to be accepted.

Done swallowing my voice to protect someone else's illusion of power.

Peace that requires silence in the face of cruelty is not peace.

It's performance.

And I'm done performing.

I don't need that room.

Never did.

Until next time,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "Anton Volney". The "A" is large and has a long horizontal stroke extending to the left. The "Volney" part has a large, sweeping "V" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right. The signature is written in a cursive, fluid style.

Dancer, Writer, Buddhist

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